Preschool Program

Guidance

Missouri
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION™

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Preschool Program Guidance supports instructional and best practices in preschool programs, Local Education Agency's (LEA), and community-based programs. This guidance document can be used in conjunction with the Blended Program Guidance developed by the Department. The intent of this guidance is to help preschool programs establish high-quality instruction and best practices within their programs. This document is a resource guide and a starting point for programs that would like to know more about starting a program or improving one that already exists. Programs should consider these different aspects when establishing a high-quality preschool. For the purposes of this document, preschool-age children are children who are one or two years from kindergarten eligibility. However, it is important to note that some funding streams may have more specific age requirements.

Early Care and Education in Missouri

On January 28, 2021, Governor Mike Parson and the Missouri Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, and Social Services announced that nearly all early childhood programs across state government would be consolidated in a single Office of Childhood. Previously, each state agency provided various services for children and families. The transition to one office allows early childhood work across state government to become more streamlined and effective. This Office ensures children and families across the state have better access to more consistent, quality programs and services. DESE houses the new Office, which provides a comprehensive approach to early childhood care and education, including all programs related to child care, home visiting, early learning, preschool, afterschool, and early intervention. DESE's commitment to early care and education (ECE) is evident in the DESE Show Me Success strategic plan as Early Learning and Early Literacy are among the four priority areas. Moving forward, DESE is excited to remain committed to early care and education, as shown in the Show Me Success strategic plan.

Why is Preschool Important?

High-quality preschool experiences provide positive educational and social outcomes for children and their families. Children who participate in ECE programming tend to experience educational, health, social emotional, and economic benefits. In the short term, ECE program participants are more ready for school, experience fewer behavioral challenges, earn higher grades throughout elementary and middle school (particularly in reading and math), and are less likely to repeat any grade. In the long-term, ECE program participants have improved social skills, are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college, receive higher pay/earnings in adulthood, and are less likely to engage in criminal activity across their lifetimes. Children from families with limited or no income benefit most from ECE program participation. In addition to the positive social and emotional outcome for children and families, research has consistently shown that the economic benefits of ECE programming are more generous than almost any other educational or social intervention. The ratio of benefits to costs for universal programs exceeds 3 to 1, at minimum. This means that for every dollar invested in universal programs and services, the benefit to participants and society is worth at least $3. The economic paybacks of targeted programs are even greater. The ratio of benefits to costs for targeted programs often exceeds 7 to 1. For every dollar invested in targeted programming, an economic benefit is worth at least $7. The combination of positive outcomes for children and families, in addition to the financial benefits, makes high-quality preschool an essential component of a successful ECE system.

Classroom Environments

Staff Qualifications

All preschool programs are encouraged to utilize lead teachers and assistant teachers who have one of the following: an Early Childhood Certification or Early Childhood Special Education Certification at the time the program begins operation or at the time of hire.

Instructional paraprofessionals/teacher assistants should meet either the preferred or the acceptable qualifications.

> **Preferred qualification** - a child development associate's degree, associate's degree in early childhood, or sixty (60) college hours with a minimum of three (3) college credit hours in early childhood, child development, or child/family related courses and experience working in a program with young children and their families.

> **Acceptable qualification** - must have sixty (60) college hours or pass the state assessment for paraprofessionals.

Programs should reference their funding stream requirements when deciding on staff requirements.

Teacher/Student Ratios

Ratio and group size depend on the needs of the children and the requirements of the individualized education program.

> Age 3 to kindergarten entry:
>
> 1 teacher for 10 children
>
> 11-20 children need two staff members in the room
>
> No more than 20 children per classroom

Staff Evaluations

Programs are encouraged to evaluate staff performance at least annually and document the results. Input from families, supervisors, and other co-workers should be included in these evaluations.

Professional Development

Professional development opportunities include college-credit courses through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Missouri®, follow-up/advanced training of the selected curriculum model provided only by the approved curriculum source, professional conferences, seminars, consultants, and the DESE regional meetings. All licensed and accredited programs should refer to their respective licensure and accreditation bodies for specific professional development requirements.

Curriculum

Approved preschool curriculum models and framework meet the following criteria based on their alignment with the Missouri Early Learning Standards, valid research, have positive evaluation results, provide ongoing professional development, and are developmentally appropriate for age-eligible children.

More information about Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved curriculums and framework.

Missouri Early Learning Standards

The Missouri Early Learning Standards (MELS) are a framework of expectations for what children can do from infancy to kindergarten entry. Each standard includes a description of what the child may be doing to demonstrate meeting the standard and activities to give adults examples of ways to support the child in learning and mastering a skill or knowledge.

Using the MELS promotes the understanding of early learning and development, provides a comprehensive set of early childhood educational expectations for children's development and learning, and guides the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices with young children.

More information about the Missouri Early Learning Standards.

Handbook, Policies, Suggested Materials

It is important to have a handbook for families that outlines all of the policies and procedures for your preschool.

The handbook should be easy to read and given to each family. For more information on handbooks, policies, and more, please see the Preschool Checklist in Appendix A.

Thinking about all of the materials that will be needed when starting a preschool program can be overwhelming. Please see the suggested materials list in Appendix B.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Assessment, and Screening

These 10 Effective Developmentally Appropriate Practice Strategies from National Association for the Education of Young Children will help you implement Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

1. **Acknowledge** what children say or do.
2. **Encourage** persistence and effort rather than just praising and evaluating what the child has done.
3. **Give specific feedback** rather than general comments.
4. **Model** attitudes, ways of approaching problems, and behavior toward others, showing children rather than just telling them.
5. **Demonstrate** the correct way to do something.
6. **Create or add challenge** so that a task goes a bit beyond what the children can already do.
7. **Ask questions** that provoke children's thinking.
8. **Give assistance** (such as a cue or hint) to help children work on the edge of their current competence.
9. **Provide information**, directly giving children facts, verbal labels, and other information.
10. **Give directions** for children's action or behavior.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Assessment, and Screening

An effective teacher or family child care provider chooses a strategy to fit a particular situation. It is important to consider what the children already know and can do and the learning goals for the specific situation. By remaining flexible and observant, you can determine which strategy may be most effective. Often, if one strategy does not work, another will.

Program experiences for preschoolers are developmentally appropriate and are individualized based on the needs of each child. Families play an important role in working with the staff in developing the goals for their children.

Interactions include open-ended questions such as "how", "why", and "what happens if". Interactions are encouraged with direct, specific, and positive feedback about children's actions. Children are helped to cope with both success and failure through encouragement and assistance in expressing feelings using acceptable words or actions. Interactions are promoted among all children regardless of differences/abilities.

Developmental Screening

A doctor, nurse, or other professional in healthcare, early childhood education, community, or school setting in collaboration with parents and caregivers can deliver developmental monitoring and screening. ECE professionals play a vital role in developmental monitoring by observing how a child grows and changes over time to meet developmental milestones. ECE professionals also assist in developmental screenings by looking at how a child is developing in a more formal process by using a developmental screening instrument to identify possible developmental delays that may need further evaluation.

To learn more about how ECE professionals can assist with developmental monitoring and screening, visit the CDC Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Health Professionals.

Student Assessment

Assessment is the ongoing process of documenting evidence of early learning to make informed instructional decisions. This evidence may include anecdotal records of children's conversations and behaviors in individual, small- and large groups, samples of artwork and drawings, and photographs, recordings, or other records of children engaged in activities and play. Programs should assess children with authentic, reliable, and valid assessments.

Program Assessment

Programs can use environmental rating scales to assess the quality of their classroom environments. The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition (ECERS-3) is the latest version of one of the most widely used observational tools for assessing the quality of classrooms serving preschool-aged children.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System or CLASS is a widely used assessment that looks at classroom interactions. Interactions between students and teachers are an integral part of students academic success in the classroom. CLASS also provides professional development opportunities to help improve teacher interactions.

Caregiver and Community Involvement

Caregiver and community involvement is extremely important in a preschool environment. You will want to make sure that all parents/caregivers have frequent communication with their child's teacher. This could be in the form of a daily note home, phone calls on a weekly basis, emails, texts, etc. It is important to note that this communication policy should be outlined and given to each family enrolled in the program.

One way that many schools have shared their communication policy and other important things to know is by creating a program handbook. The handbook can be used to outline communication, discipline, health and safety, and drop off/pick up procedures. The handbook can be given to each family at enrollment time and to any new family that enrolls their child. Please see Appendix A for more ideas on items that can go into your program's handbook.

Family fun nights are another way to have caregiver involvement. There are a lot of ways that these evenings could be a fun and educational experience to get students and caregivers into the classrooms. Schools could pick a theme and plan activities around the theme. This allows caregivers the time to come and see their students work displayed in the classroom and a chance to talk in person with their child's teachers.

Parent/teacher conferences are another great way to allow some time for caregivers to come into the classroom. Traditionally, most public schools offer parent/teacher conferences twice a year; once in the Fall and once in the Spring. Preschools could follow this same schedule or follow their own conference schedule.

Community involvement is a great way to help the local community become involved in the preschool classroom. Preschools could find a local business or businesses that would like to be an education partner. Workers could come volunteer at the preschool, donate supplies, or help plan/fund events. If there are businesses close to school, consider making decorations for them. The children may even be able to take a walk as a class and deliver them to the business.

Preschool Funding

Depending on individual program needs, there are several sources for funding preschool in Missouri. The sources include federal, state, and local funding options. Each program will need to determine which funding stream is appropriate for its program. It is important to remember that each funding stream has its own set of requirements that programs will need to reference when planning.

Funding Sources

Funding sources may include:

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): State and federal funds to support services for students with disabilities. *Note: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines students with disabilities as those children, ages three (3) to twenty-one (21), who have been properly evaluated as having Intellectual Disability, Hearing Impairments and Deafness, Speech or Language Impairments, Visual Impairments including Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Orthopedic Impairments, Autism, Traumatic Brain Injury, Other Health Impairments, a Specific Learning Disability, Deaf Blindness, or Multiple Disabilities and, who because of that disability, require special education and related services. As allowed under 34 CFR 300.87 implementing IDEA, the State of Missouri also defines a child with a disability to include ages three (3) through five (5) who have been properly identified as a young child with a developmental delay.*

Title I Preschool: Federal funds to support low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. To help all children succeed in kindergarten and primary grades, Title I funds may provide preschool education. Title I preschool programs are designed for educationally disadvantaged three and four-year-old children. Educationally disadvantaged children are children whose educational attainment is below the level appropriate for children of their age.

Prekindergarten students claimed in the Foundation Formula: This funding allows districts or charter schools to claim a portion of their prekindergarten students in the Foundation Formulation. In order to be eligible to be claimed in Average Daily Attendance (ADA) used in the Foundation Formula, a prekindergarten pupil must reach the age of three before the first day of August of the school year beginning in that calendar year.
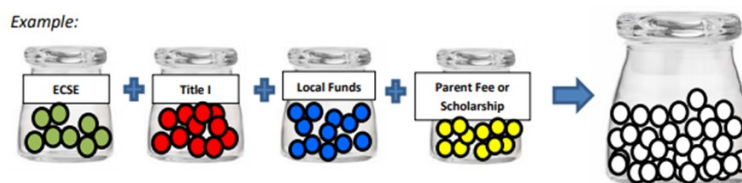
Child Care Subsidy: Child care providers can register with DESE to receive payment for care provided to subsidy eligible children.

Tuition/Scholarships/Grants: LEA's can use tuition fees (paid for by parents/caregivers), scholarships, and grant funds to fund preschool programs. *Note: Programs should ensure funding streams allow the collection of tuition.*

Early Learning Blended Program

Blended funding occurs when the educational costs for a group of children representing various eligibility types share and support two or more funding sources to ensure consistency, eliminate duplication of services, allow for maximum flexibility of funds, and reduce burden. There is no new Federal or State funding available through DESE for a blended program. Instead, blended programs use existing resources to support increased access for children to inclusive early learning programs.

To learn more about pooling funds to create an early learning blended program, visit Blended Program.

Example: ECSE + Title I + Local Funds + Parent Fee or Scholarship →

Program Quality

The Department believes high expectations, a clear vision, and a few focused, high-impact goals are critical to drive the improvement efforts necessary to bring about positive results. Programs can measure the effectiveness of early learning experiences through self-assessments using Environmental Rating Scale, Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Department-approved classroom environmental assessment, or Parents as Teachers National Center Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process.

There are six areas in the quality framework that all come together to create high quality preschool programs: Staff Professional Development, Classroom Environment, Family Engagement, Approved Curriculum, Classroom Assessments, and Teacher-Child Interactions.

You may be familiar with the Quality Assurance Report (QAR) program that started in 2019. It was just extended in legislation this year to continue through 2028 so we are excited to be scaling up this project in the next year.
We already have a small group of early childhood classrooms participated in the pilot to attend professional development training and receive classroom assessments and coaching. For more information on the QAR program, visit our webpage.

Licensure
Licensing holds programs accountable for the health and safety of the program. The Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers are available through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Accreditation
If seeking accreditation, programs should obtain it through either Missouri Accreditation (MOA) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). When choosing an accrediting source, programs should consider requirements and how they align with their program.

Please note that the Child Care Subsidy Program recognizes additional accrediting organizations.

> **Missouri Accreditation (MOA)**
> Missouri Accreditation functions in areas beyond the scope of state licensing for early childhood and school age programming. To receive accreditation, a program must exceed the minimum licensing requirements. Missouri Accreditation focuses on qualitative aspects of the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth opportunities made available to children enrolled in center-based, home-based, school age care and education programs.
>
> More information about Missouri Accreditation.
>
> **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**
> Achieving NAEYC Accreditation is a four-step process that involves self-reflection and quality improvement in order to meet and maintain accreditation over a five-year period. Directors, teachers, and families all participate in the process.
>
> More information about National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation.

School Readiness and Transitions

Children entering school for the first time bring with them a unique set of skills and behaviors based on personal characteristics and experiences. Assessing the development of all children from birth to school entry allows families and community agencies to identify concerns and provide additional support to be responsive to the child's needs. These early experiences help prepare the child for school. Multiple factors influence school readiness, including family, community, ECE services, and schools. Missouri's definition of school readiness addresses how each of these factors impact children entering school.

For **children**, school readiness is being prepared in key dimensions of early learning and development (social and emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, motor, health and physical well-being, and positive attitudes and behaviors toward learning).

For **families**, school readiness is providing a safe environment for children to grow and learn and an understanding of their children's current health and development.

For **communities**, school readiness is providing families with access to community resources and valuing the critical role of early learning.

For **early care & education (ECE)** services, school readiness is having a variety of services available to all families in the community and providing services based on the families' needs.

For **schools**, school readiness is providing a welcoming and accepting environment for all children, and having educators who consistently advance student growth and achievement while working in partnership with families.

To learn more about school readiness including Missouri's School Readiness Indicators, visit Missouri's Early Care & Education Early Connections.

For children and their parents, the transition from preschool to kindergarten is an exciting and daunting time. The successful coordination between preschool programs and kindergarten classrooms help lay the groundwork for a child's positive school experience. The ability for preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers to work together makes the transition less scary for students and their families. Each school should have a plan set in place on how to make the transition from preschool to kindergarten a successful one for all students. The plan could include things like preschoolers visiting kindergarten classrooms, kindergarten teachers being guest readers in the preschool classrooms, kindergarten round up nights where parents and students can come into the school and see the classrooms and meet the teachers. Preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers should also have times to work together throughout the year to discuss what students are needing as they enter kindergarten.

To learn more about the importance of transitioning to kindergarten visit Transition to Kindergarten— A Brief: Why it matters and how to promote success.

Afterschool Programs
Before- and after-school programs provide students with academic enrichment opportunities and activities designed to complement their regular school day's academic program during non-school hours. They provide a range of high-quality services to support student learning and development, including tutoring and mentoring, homework help, academic enrichment (such as hands-on math, reading/language arts, and science programs), community service opportunities, as well as music, arts, sports, and cultural activities. Afterschool programs incorporate a strong partnership of school, family, and community members that collaboratively contribute to the growth of students as they mature into caring, competent, and responsible adults.

More information about Missouri's Afterschool Programs.

Infant/Toddler Program

There are several schools that have started an infant/toddler program along with their preschools.

The information below is specifically for infant/toddler programs.

Teacher/Student Ratios

Age Birth-2:
    1 teacher for every 4 children

Age 2-3:
    1 teacher for every 8 children

Classroom Environment

Infants and toddlers learn best in environments where they can have stable relationships with caring and responsive adults, and where they feel safe and free to explore and learn. Young children will naturally be drawn to explore an environment that looks inviting.

Some things to consider when setting up the infant and toddler environment are "What do the children need and enjoy the most when it comes to playtime?", "Is there enough space for toddlers to play alone or with others?", "Is there enough space for active play and exploration?" and "Is the room appropriately child-proofed?".

See Appendix C for a list of developmentally appropriate toys and materials that are suggested for infant and toddler programs.

Curriculum and Missouri Early Learning Standards

Even the youngest learners can benefit from having a program that follows a curriculum. A few of the DESE approved curriculums have infant and toddler pieces for those programs that will be including infants and toddlers.

More information about Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved curriculums and framework.

Using the MELS promotes the understanding of early learning and development, provides a comprehensive set of early childhood educational expectations for children's development and learning, and guides the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices with young children.

More information about the Missouri Early Learning Standards.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Information shared from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

The earliest years are all about relationships. Infants and toddlers crave and develop attachments to the special people in their lives. Depending on how parents, early childhood educators, and others treat them, babies also develop expectations about people and themselves. Young infants (0 to 9 months) seek security. Mobile infants (8 to 18 months) are eager to explore. Toddlers (16 to 36 months) are working on their identity and they want to know who they are and who's in charge.
Our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than at any other point in our lives. Understanding typical development from birth through age 3 and knowing how the youngest children learn and develop helps professionals closely attune to individual children's needs, and helps build the foundation for life-long learners.

Assessment and Screening

Skills and abilities develop rapidly from birth to Kindergarten. Developmental screenings and assessments are important for all children, including infants and toddlers, even if there are no current concerns. These screenings and assessments help us determine if children are hitting developmental milestones and help guide day to day activities and lessons to meet the needs of each individual child.

Resources

Accreditation

Child Care Subsidy Program additional accrediting organizations

Missouri Accreditation (MOA)

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Afterschool Programs

Missouri's Afterschool Programs

Assessments

Classroom Assessment Scoring System- CLASS

The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition (ECERS-3)

Curriculum

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved curriculums and framework

Developmental Screening

CDC Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Health Professionals

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

10 Effective DAP Strategies from NAEYC

Kindergarten Transition

Transition to Kindergarten– A Brief: Why it matters and how to promote success.

Licensure

Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers

Missouri Early Learning Standards

Missouri Early Learning Standards

Missouri Quality Assurance Report

QAR

Preschool Funding Sources

Average Daily Attendance (Foundation Formula)

Blended Program

Child Care Subsidy

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

Title I Preschool

Professional Development

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Missouri®

School Readiness

Missouri's Early Care & Education Early Connections

Appendix A -Preschool Start-Up Considerations

Determine Need

- Have you engaged stakeholders to discuss current preschool and early childcare needs?
- How many young children live in or around your community?
- How many children are currently served?
  - Head Start
  - Early Head Start
  - Private centers/Homes
  - Public school district
- What settings are the children currently being served?
  - ECSE only
  - Onsite
  - Alternative setting
  - Itinerant services only
- Do you have the capacity to open or expand preschool programs in your district?
  - Staffing
  - Physical space
  - Funding
- How can preschool support school readiness in your community?

Student Enrollment

- One year before Kindergarten (4 & 5 year olds)
- Two years before Kindergarten (3 & 4 year olds)
- Early Childhood Special Education
- Total number of classrooms _____

Funding

- Parent Pay/Scholarships/Childcare Subsidy
- Title I *
- PK State Aid / Average Daily Attendance *
- Early Childhood Special Education *

Teachers/Staff

- Teacher has certification
  - Early Childhood OR
  - Early Childhood Special Education
- Student Teacher Ratio 1:10
  - Aide needed for 11-20 students
- No more than 20 students per classroom
- Professional Development
  - Curriculum Training
  - DESE Approved Conferences
  - School Wide Professional Development

Program Schedule

- Half Day Program
  - AM
  - PM
  - Both
- Full Day Program
  - 4 Days a week
  - 5 Days a week
- Before School Care
- After School Care
- Follows School Calendar
- Follows 12-month Calendar

Curriculum/Evaluation

- Use a DESE approved Curriculum
- Lessons and activities align with the MELS
- Daily Schedule is posted
- Developmental Screenings are used
- Screening results are shared with families
- Referral process in place for identified concerns
- Specials offered (Art, PE, Music, Library, and Counselor)
- Progress Reports / Report Cards

Food

- Breakfast
  - School
  - Parent
  - Other:
- Lunch
  - School
  - Parent
  - Other:
- Snack
  - AM
  - PM

Transportation

- AM
  - Bus
  - Parent
  - Other:
- Noon
  - Bus
  - Parent
  - Other:
- PM
  - Bus
  - Parent
  - Other:
- Field Trips/Special Events
  - Bus
  - Parent
  - Other:

Consumables

- Paint, Pencils, Markers/Crayons, Paper, Construction Paper, Glue, etc.
  - School provided
  - Parent provided

Health and Safety

- Child immunizations records on file
- Health policies and procedures in writing
  - Sick Child Policy
  - Medication administration
    - Parent consent
  - Allergies and dietary needs
  - Injury/accident procedures
  - Handwashing and toileting procedures
- Emergency plan for fire, tornado, earthquake, intruder, etc.
  - Posted in room/classroom
  - Emergency drill practice schedule
- Emergency Bag
  - Notebook with all students contact information, allergies, class list, etc.
  - First aid kit

Learning Environment

- Age appropriate furniture and equipment are available
- Playground
  - Easily Accessible
  - Age Appropriate
- Bathrooms
  - Easily Accessible
  - Age Appropriate
- Nap mat / cot
  - School
  - Parent
- Nap bedding
  - School
  - Parent
- Designated space for each child's belongings
- Books (Fiction and Nonfiction)
- Art tools and supplies
- Fine Motor and manipulatives
- Dramatic Play Area
- Nature/Science Materials
- Math and Numbers
- Music and Movement

Policy/Handbook

- Written documentation of admission and discharge policies
- Program orientation for families
- Handbook is shared with families and has the following:
  - Communication plan
  - Admission and discharge of children
  - Days and hours of operation
  - School supply list
  - Transition plan to Kindergarten
  - Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporter policy
  - Parent Teacher Conference Schedule
  - Guidance/ Discipline Policy
  - Admission Age Requirement
  - Inclement Weather
  - Health Policy
  - Student Dress Code
  - Nap / Rest Time
  - Toilet Training Policy
  - Birthdays / Holidays
  - Technology Policy
  - Media / Photo Policy

Family Engagement

- Parent Advisory Committee
- Family Fun Nights
- Communication Plan with Families
  - Newsletters/Flyers
  - Emails/Phone Calls
  - Daily Notes
- Volunteer Opportunities

* denotes funding available to public preschools

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Appendix A - 2

Appendix B – Suggested Materials and Supplies
Preschool Classrooms

Below is a list of materials and supplies that you may consider when opening a Preschool program.

Block Area

Blocks enhance children's problem-solving abilities, mathematics skills, and language and literacy abilities. Accessories for block play may include small people, vehicles, animals, and other items.

Types of Blocks

- Unit blocks
- Hollow blocks
- Big cardboard blocks
- Soft or foam blocks

Accessories
Small People

- Multicultural families
- People with special needs
- Community helpers
- Kids sets

Vehicles

- Small and large cars
- Trucks, trains, buses, tractors
- Construction equipment

Animals

- Farm
- Zoo
- Forest
- Other animals

Other

- Unit block tunnel and arches set
- Road sign set
- Vehicles
- Rug for block area
- Block storage unit
- Books (construction, cars. etc.)
- Writing materials
- Legos or Lincoln Logs
- Waffle blocks

Art Area

Art activities stimulate both sides of the brain and helps foster creativity and self-expression. It also helps enhance motor skills and language development.

Drawing

- Crayons (basic colors, people colors)
- Markers (washable, all colors)
- Drawing paper (white or manila)
- Pencils and pens
- Chalk

Paints

- Washable finger paints (all colors, multicultural colors)
- Watercolors

Three-Dimensional

- Playdough
- Clay
- Wood scraps
- Boxes

Collage Materials

- Glue and glue sticks
- Construction paper (all colors, sizes, and textures)
- Collage making materials (example: cotton balls, crafts sticks, feathers)
- String or yarn

Tools

- Scissors (child size)
- Paint brushes (various sizes, thick and thin)
- Paint cups
- Art easel (multi-sided)
- Paint smocks or paint shirts
- Cookie cutters and playdough tools
- Tape (scotch, masking, and colored)
- Stapler and hole punch
- Weaving materials
- Books (story, drawing books, nonfiction, example: famous artist)
- Art posters
- Stamps, stamp pad
- Stencils

Dramatic Play

Dramatic Play materials allow children to act out roles while learning real life skills. It supports social-emotional and cognitive development, and helps build math and language skills.

- Dress-up clothes (men's and women's)
- Trunk or prop box
- Dress-Up accessories (jewelry, ties, sunglasses, gloves, etc.)
- Dolls (Include male and female, multicultural)
- Doll equipment (blankets, stroller, car seat, high chair, etc.)
- Kitchen set
- Table and chairs
- Play food
- Dishes
- Cleaning equipment (broom, vacuum, duster, etc.)
- Mirrors (full length and hand held)
- Items that show numerals (telephones, calculators, price tags, cash registers)
- Other role props (example: office, store, camping, etc.)
- Print materials (magazines, books, menus)
- Paper and writing tools
- Dollhouse sets (fire house, farm, garage)

Fine Motor

Manipulatives and fine motor activities allow children develop fine motor skills that help with tasks suh as, eating, writing, manipulating objects and getting dressed.

Manipulatives

- Interlocking Building Materials
- Legos
- Gear sets
- People builders or other builders
- MagnaTiles
- Stringing beads or buttons
- Pegs and pegboards
- Sewing cards
- Table blocks
- Nuts and bolts
- Nesting Toys
- Dominoes

Puzzles

- Floor puzzles
- Framed puzzles

Miscellaneous

- Play-doh
- Play-doh toys (rolling pins, cookie cutters, etc.)
- Child safe scissors
- Finger paint
- Board games

Math Materials

Math materials fall into three categories: Counting/comparing quantities, Measuring/comparing size and parts of whole, and familiarity with shapes.

Counting and Comparing Quantities

- Magnetic, plastic, or foam number sets
- Counters
- Games (board games, card games, teacher-created games)
- Tactile numbers
- Dice
- Charts (number charts, graphing charts)
- Books (counting books)

Measuring and Comparing Parts of Whole

- Sorting sets
- Balance
- Rulers
- Tape measure, yard stick, height chart
- Measuring cups

Familiarity with Shapes

- Geo boards
- Pattern and shape blocks
- Three Dimensional items (cones, cubes, etc.)
- Shape puzzles
- Shape books

Nature Science

Nature and Science materials allow children to explore, experiment and pose questions about the world around them.

Living Things

- Plants (non-toxic)
- Class pets
- Outside garden

Natural Items

- Bird's nest
- Natural collections (seashells, rocks, seeds, etc.)

Factual Books/Nature Science Pictures

- Books about weather
- Books about animals, birds, etc.

Tools

- Magnifying glasses (different sizes)
- Magnets
- Measuring Cups
- Scales
- Globe
- Color mixing materials

- Flashlights
- Compass
- Tweezers and tongs
- Safety equipment (goggles, gloves, etc.)
- Eye droppers
- Levers, pulleys, pinwheels
- Telescope, binoculars
- Kaleidoscopes
- Thermometers
- String
- Wax paper, aluminum foil, etc.

Sand and Water Play

- Plastic containers and tubs
- Plastic tubing
- Sand and water table
- Paper and writing tools
- Posters and charts
- Digging and pouring tools

Library/Language Area

The book area stimulates children's imagination and thinking skills, encourages developing language, and provides opportunities for creative expression through storytelling or puppetry.

- Alphabet chart
- Book rack (book covers should be displayed)
- Carpet or rug
- Soft materials (pillows, beanbags, etc.)
- CD or tape player
- Books on CD or tape
- Headphones
- Puppets (teacher-made or purchased)
- Puppet theater or curtain
- Flannel board and flannel pieces
- Sequencing cards
- Big Books and Big Book easel/storage

- Books of all kinds (high quality)
  - Non-Fiction
  - Picture books
  - Simple stories
  - Predictable books
  - Rhyming books
  - Multicultural books
  - Gender diversity books
  - Alphabet books
  - Nursery Rhymes
  - Poetry

Writing Area

A writing area provides opportunities for developing fine motor skills, concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, and creating and exploring texts.

- Magnetic, foam, or plastic letters
- Alphabet chart
- Alphabet books and picture dictionary
- Rubber stamps and stamp pads
- Chalk or magnetic white board
- Tracing letters
- Paper (variety of unlined paper)
- Stapler
- Scissors
- Tape

- Writing tools (pencils, markers, colored pencils)
- Number charts
- Envelopes
- Cards
- Stickers
- Cubbies or organized space for supplies
- Pencil sharpener
- Recipe charts, procedure charts
- Children's names,
- Labels and pictures

Music and Movement Area

Music and movement activities enable children to improve self-expression, hand-eye coordination, physical activity and learn new concepts in a fun and engaging way.

- CD's and/or tapes
  - Classical, country/western, jazz, multicultural, children's music, etc.
- Headphones
- CD or tape players (children can use)
- Movement CD's or tapes
  - Beanbag games, dance along, movement games
- Musical instruments
- Beanbags
- Dance Ribbons and scarves
- Books that go with songs (example: Down by the Station, etc.)
- Music books with notes
- Parachute
- Rhythm instruments
- Bells

Outdoor/Large Motor Area

Outdoor/gross Motor play helps refine balance, strength, muscle endurance and coordination.

- Balls (various shapes and sizes)
- Riding toys (pedal, steer, and push/pull)
- Safety equipment (helmets, etc.)
- Climbing equipment
- Balancing equipment
- Sports equipment
- Portable equipment (hula-hoops, jump ropes, rakes bug catchers, etc.)
- Large vehicles (bull dozer, trucks, dump trucks, etc.)
- Benches or picnic table (child size)
- Natural items (plants, trees, etc.)
- Sidewalk chalk
- Sandbox or sand table and tools (shovels, trucks, rakes, etc.)
- Greenhouse/garden equipment (flowerpots, seeds, dirt, etc.)
- Bubbles and wands
- Ring Toss games
- Play tunnels or items to create obstacle course
- Balance beam
- Other materials (dramatic play, magnifying glass, books, art materials, etc.)

Diversity Items

Supporting diversity can enrich preschool classrooms and help children to feel good about themselves, while exposing children to differences, things that are unfamiliar, and experiences beyond their immediate lives.

- Books
- Posters
- Photos
- Dramatic Play materials (food, dolls, puzzles, etc.)

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Appendix C – Suggested Materials and Supplies
Infant and Toddler Programs

Below is a list of materials and supplies that you may consider when opening an infant and toddler program.

General Storage

- Cubbies or individual storage bins
- Message center for parents (bulletin board, binder, folders, etc.)
- Lockable storage for teacher belongings
- Lockable storage for hazardous materials, items not in use

Diapering Area

- Heavy duty diapering table w/ 6" high edge for safety (with retractable steps)
- Waterproof & washable table pad
- Wall storage unit for diapering supplies
- Heavy duty trash can w/lid & foot operated opener
- Child size toilets or potty chairs for potty trainers
- Gloves, sanitizer, paper towels, etc.

Sleeping Area

- Cribs (One designated for evacuation)
- Crib sheets
- Mats or cots for toddlers (with sheets)
- Blankets

Cozy Book/Play Area

- Thick mat or soft floor covering
- Pillows (used with supervision)
- Puppets, stuffed animals, soft dolls
- Book holders or display shelf
- Assorted cloth, vinyl, and board books

Eating Area

- Highchairs, low chairs and tables
- Glider rockers or other adult seating for feeding infants
- Bottle warmer
- Food service thermometer
- Bibs
- Small cups, plates, bowls, and utensils
- Serving plates, bowls, and utensils

Manipulatives

- Containers and low shelves
- Cause and effect toys (pop-up toys, jack in the box, etc.)
- Grasping toys (rattles, rings, squeeze toys)
- Stacking/nesting toys
- Shape sorters
- Interlocking toys (blocks, rings, etc.)
- Puzzles with knobs (6-10 pieces)
- Hammering toys

Block Area

- Soft blocks
- Cardboard blocks
- Cars or trucks
- Toy animals
- Community figures and people
- Soft flooring or mats

Art Area

- Easel
- Easy grip paint brushes
- Smocks
- Playdough, cookie cutters, rollers, etc.
- Child safe scissors
- Nontoxic paints and finger paints

Sensory/Science Area

- Teething toys
- Sensory table and accessories (shovels, cups, funnels, sifters)
- Items that float/sink
- Light table
- Various textured materials
- Mirrors (non-breakable)

Music Area

- Music player (CD, music apps, etc.)
- Musical instruments
- Rattles and squeaky toys
- Scarves and ribbons
- Bean bags and shakers

Dramatic Play Area

- Dolls and stuffed animals
- Toy phones
- Toy dishes and cooking utensils
- Bags to put things in
- Small kitchen set
- Small table and chairs (for toddlers and twos)

Large Motor and Outdoor Play

- Assorted Balls
- Age appropriate climbing structures
- Outdoor play mats
- Tunnels
- Push/Pull Toys
- Ride on toys
- Parachute
- Baskets, buckets, and shovels
- Sand table and toys
- Multiple child stroller

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